

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 230661

NODIS

FOR AMBASSADOR ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT SECTO 27145 17 SEP 76

QUOTE S E C R E T SECTO 27145

NODIS

FOR HABIB AND ATHERTON FROM SECRETARY

PASS URGENTLY TO WHITE HOUSE FOR SCROWCROFT

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, EG

SUBJ: INSTRUCTIONS FOR TALKS WITH ISRAELIS ON GULF OF SUEZ--
SEPTEMBER 17

REF: A) STATE 230344 TOSEC 270261

1. FIRST, YOU SHOULD PURSUE FOLLOWING STRATEGY IN TALKS
FRIDAY: OUR PURPOSE IN PRESENT TALKS IS ONLY TO SETTLE
ISSUE OF AMOCO DRILLING AT 304.1 WITHOUT HARRASSMENT BY
SEPTEMBER 21 AND TO LEAVE QUESTION OF FUTURE DRILLING TO
LATER TALKS WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO POSITION OF EITHER SIDE.

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I HAD UNDER STOOD FROM DINITZ THAT SUCH A LIMITED

UNDERSTANDING WAS POSSIBLE. TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE MUST
NO RPT NOT INSIST ON ISRAELI COMMITMENT ON FUTURE
DRILLING IN PRESENT TALKS. SIMILARLY, WE CANNOT MAKE
ANY COMMITMENT AS TO OUR POSITION ON FUTURE DRILLING.

2. SECOND, HABIB SHOULD TALK WITH DINITZ PRIVATELY ON
MY BEHALF AND SAY WE ARE PREPARED TO SETTLE 304.1
ISSUE AND LEAVE OTHER ISSUES FOR LATER TALKS. IT CANNOT
SERVE ISRAELI OR U.S. INTERESTS TO HAVE A CONFRONTATION
ON THIS ISSUE NOW. USG WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO
DEFEND VIGOROUSLY RITH OF U.S. COMPANY TO PURSUE ITS
LEGITIMATE BUSINESS.

3. FULLER EXPOSITION OF OUR POSITION SHOULD BE MADE
ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

-- WE INVITED ISRAELI TEAM TO WASHINGTON TO SETTLE
IMMEDIATE ISSUE OF ALLOWING AMOCO TO DRILL AT SITE
304.1 WITHOUT HARRASSMENT BY SEPTEMBER 21.

-- WE UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS COULD BE WORKED OUT AS A
PRACTICAL MATTER NOW RPT NOW WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO
THE POSITION OF EITHER SIDE ON AMOCO'S FUTURE
DRILLING OPERATIONS.

--IN RESPONSE TO PRIME MINISTER RABIN'S REQUEST, WE
HAVE DESCRIBED AMOCO'S FUTURE DRILLING PLANS SO THAT
THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT MAKE HIS DECISION ON 304.1
IN THE CONTEXT OF THAT KNOWLEDGE.

-- WE ARE NOT INSISTING ON AN ISRAELI COMMITMENT IN
THE PRESENT TALKS ON AMOCO'S FUTURE DRILLING PLANS,
SOME OF WHICH RELATE TO OPERATIONS IN ESTABLISHED
FIELDS WHICH ISRAELIS HAVE NOT CONTESTED. THOSE CAN
BE DISCUSSED IN FUTURE TALKS.

--BY THE SAME TOKEN, THE U.S. CANNOT BE ASKED TO
COMMIT ITSELF TODAY ON AMOCO'S FUTURE DRILLING PLANS OR
TO PRINCIPLE OF MEDIAN LINE.

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--WE ARE NOT, THEREFORE, PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE ISRAELI
PROPOSAL TO AGREE TO AMOCO DRILLING AT 304.1 IF AND
ONLY IF THE U.S. WOULD ASSURE ISRAEL WE WOULD NOT RPT
NOT SUPPORT AMOCO IN EFFORTS TO DRILL AT ANY OTHER
SITE EAST OF PRESENTLY OPERATING WELLS AND PLATFORMS.
IT IS JUST AS UNREALISTIC TO ASK US TO MAKE SUCH A
COMMITMENT AS IT WOULD BE FOR US TO ASK ISRAEL TO
CHANGE ITS POLICY IN THE CONTEXT OF RESOLVING AN

IMMEDIATE PRACTICAL PROBLEM.

--OUR PROPOSAL IS TO RESOLVE THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE AT 304.1 AND THEN TO DISCUSS THE LONGER RANGE PROBLEM IN LATER TALKS WHEN THE TENSION HAS DIMINISHED. HOW TO HANDLE LONGER TERM ISSUE CAN BE DISCUSSED WHEN SECRETARY AND FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON MEET IN NEW YORK.

--IT WAS THE SECRETARY'S UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS LIMITED SOLUTION COULD BE ACHIEVED. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT IT BE ACHIEVED IN THE PRESENT TALKS SO THAT A CONFRONTATION CAN BE AVOIDED OVER WHAT WILL BE SEEN IN THE U.S. AS ISRAELI HARRASSMENT OF AN AMERICAN COMPANY DOING LEGITIMATE BUSINESS.

--IF THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT AGREE TO THIS LIMITED UNDERSTANDING, WE WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO EXPLAIN OUR POSITION IN TERMS OF LONGER-TERM LEGAL ISSUES. WE ARE TRYING TO AVOID JOINING THAT ISSUE PUBLICLY NOW BY LIMITED UNDERSTANDING.

4. IN SHORT,I WANT TO BE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR BEFORE AUTHORIZING FURTHER STEPS THAT THERE IS NO IMPLICATION IN ISRAELI MINDS THAT WE ARE INSISTING ON ISRAELI COMMITMENT BEYOND DRILLING AT 304.1. WHILE RESERVING OUR POSITION ON THE FUTURE, WE WILL SETTLE FOR 304.1 TODAY.

KISSINGER ROBINSON

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